

Message Text

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ACTION MC-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 PM-03 SSO-00 ACDA-05 DODE-00

EB-07 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 /029 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 98

SECDEF

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DEPT PASS TO COLT FIREARMS, HARTFORD, CONN.

ATTN: BILL CRAVEN CDR USAMC, ALEX VA, AMCIL-O/AP

CDR USAARMCOM, ROCK ISLAND, ILL., SARRI-LS, AMSAR-MMI-M

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS KS

SUBJECT: HPT TEST AMMO SHORTAGE THREATENS M-16 PLANT SHUTDOWN

SUMMARY: TO AVOID IMMINENT SHUTDOWN COLT M-16 PLANT, EMBASSY/COMUSK REQUEST IMMEDIATE APPROVAL WITHIN NEXT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS OF EXPORT LICENSES FOR COMMERCIAL SALE TO ROK BY COLT FIREARMS DIVISION OF 7000 ROUNDS SAAMI DEFINITIVE PROOF-TEST AMMUNITION AND 105 POUNDS SINGLE BASE TUBULAR PROPELLENT (SR 7641). WE UNDERSTAND COLT IS SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS TO OFFICE OF MUNITIONS CONTROL IN DEPARTMENT, AND IS PREPARED AIR FREIGHT THESE ITEMS TO AVOID SUBSTANTIAL PLANT SHUTDOWN AS EARLY AS MAY 23. END SUMMARY.

1. HISTORY CURRENT SITUATION BEGAN WITH APPROVAL AUG 23, 1974 OF FMS CASE (DESIGNATED NDT) FOR 180,000 ROUNDS M197 HIGH PRESSURE TEST AMMUNITION TO SUPPORT CY 75 M-16 PRODUCTION. DELIVERY WAS SCHEDULED FOR MAY 1975. IN JAN 1975 MINISTRY DEFENSE REQUESTED EXPEDITED DELIVERY OF 50,000 ROUNDS AND US ARMY MATERIEL COMMAND PROVIDED 6,000 ROUNDS WHICH WAS ALL IT HAD. THEN ON MAY 2 US ARMY ARMAMENT COMMAND (ARMCOM) ADVISED THAT THE PROPELLENT FOR ITS ANNUAL

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HPT PRODUCTION RUN HAD FAILED TO MEET SPECIFICATIONS AND

THAT ADDITIONAL AMMO COULD NOT BE DELIVERED BEFORE JUNE 1975.

2. WITHOUT HPT AMMO WHICH RUNS OUT MAY 17, M-16 BOLT AND BARREL ASSEMBLY PRODUCTION WILL STOP. ACCORDINGLY, WITH JUSMAG ADVICE, ROK OFFICIALS INQUIRED AND HAVE BEEN TOLD BY COLT THAT CAL .223 SAAMI DEFINITIVE PROOF AMMO CAN BE SUBSTITUTED AND THAT REMINGTON ARMS HAS 7,000 ROUNDS THAT COULD BE IMMEDIATELY AIRSHIPPED TO KOREA IF ARMCOM APPROVED. WE UNDERSTAND THROUGH JUSMAG PHONE CONVERSATION THAT ARMCOM APPROVAL HAS BEEN GIVEN AND THAT COLT HAS OR WILL IMMEDIATELY SUBMIT EXPORT LICENSE REQUEST TO MUNITIONS CONTROL IN DEPARTMENT.

3. BESIDES 7,000 ROUNDS HPT AMMO, IN ORDER TO ENABLE EMERGENCY PRODUCTION OF HPT AMMO AT ROKA ARSENAL IN KOREA, 105 POUNDS OF SINGLE BASE TUBULAR PROPELLANT (SR 7641) IS REQUIRED. PROPELLANT WILL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT TEST ROUNDS UNTIL RECEIPT OF US PRODUCTION IN JUNE. UNDERSTAND COLT HAS PROPELLANT PREPARED FOR IMMEDIATE SHIPMENT AND HAS SUBMITTED REQUEST TO MUNITIONS CONTROL FOR EXPORT LICENSE.

4. IN VIEW OBVIOUS ADVERSE POLITICAL, MILITARY, AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF SHUTDOWN, REQUEST EXCEPTIONAL ACTION BE TAKEN TO EXPEDITE EXPORT LICENSE ISSUANCE WITHIN NEXT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS TO ENABLE SHIPMENTS TO ARRIVE PRIOR TO MAY 23.
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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TAGS: MASS, KS, COLT
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Type: TE
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